
OUR DEPRESSION

A PLAY
IN NINE SCENES

O. W. Rethorst

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To that abundant foolishness exhibited by all of us in the years of 1928 and 1929, and with a prayer that has in it little hope of any forthcoming fulfillment, this little book is solemnly dedicated.

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PREFACE

The depression has now been our unfinished business for over five years. What progress are we making in overcoming it? What is the criterion by which we can judge if we are making any headway in emerging from it?

It seems there is but one true test,—the number remaining unemployed. When all, or nearly all, are employed at fair wages there is no depression. And the number unemployed determines the severity of a depression. And it is almost as equally true this severity wanes only as the number of unemployed wanes.

Those who remain employed, and those who can weather a depression anyway, are affected but slightly by it. In fact many of these gain on account of declining prices.

Statistics seem to indicate that after five years or more the number unemployed has decreased but slightly, if any. Yet business on the whole seems much improved over its low of 1932. Our surpluses in many lines have decreased materially, and manufacture and consumption in such lines are approaching normal. Yet the number unemployed remains almost stationary. What is the cause of this? No doubt there is a cause for such situation. But what is it?

The following verses, if they may be called verses, are not an attempt to answer this question, but merely set forth on this subject a few abstract ideas of

The Writer.

June 1, 1936

PLAYERS

Ezra, *retired business man, in charge of local relief*

Abner, *retired business man*

MacDougal, *Assistant to Ezra*

Randall

Bamberger

O'Keefe

}

*friends of Ezra, Abner,
and MacDougal*

Katherine, *wife of Abner*

Rosella, *Abner's daughter*

Porter, *son of MacDougal and friend of Rosella*

Citizens

Fools

Chorus

Scene: *United States.*

OUR DEPRESSION

SCENE I.

A street in front of bank.

Enter MacDougal, Randall and Citizens.

RANDALL

What mean these people here?
Can it be true that frost is in this bank?
Or is this but some demonstration of
The mind brought forth by some unkind report?

MACDOUGAL

'Tis not unlikely but
Some rumor loosed itself upon the air.
The mind is fertile now to hatch such thoughts.
Nor could the time be more propitious to
Disseminate such fears. We'll question one
Or more to see if rumor brought them here.
Sir, pardon me, but is some fear abroad
This bank may close that brings you here? Or do
You come because it is what others do?

CITIZEN

It is safety first for me. Possibly it is
Rumor only for I know nothing. You hear it on
The street and you see it here. If no truth is
In the report no harm will be done by taking out
What little I have. Then I can close my eyes at
Night and, if it wishes, the bank may close by day.
If the bank can withstand the run and remain open,
Possibly I will return what I take out.

RANDALL

'Tis rumor only bringing these men here.
How oft 'tis thus. A specter born of dreams
And loosed to pass from ear to ear and plague
Or bring some fear into our minds. The harm
Is done before the cause of it can be
O'ercome. In our distress 'tis easy for
The mind to listen to and heed such tales.
And yet 'tis possible some truth may be
In this report. Now many banks do close.
And many more no doubt have fears each day.
So common now are such events that they
No more are news. We notice only those
That ruin us or happen close to home.
If this persists at length the worst will come,
And more distress to our community.
Howe'er there's nothing that can stop this run.
We teach to "Let the peoples' will be done."
Herein we only hope that all is well.
Of this some hours of time alone will tell.

MACDOUGAL

It seems as many fall in line as those
That get their funds and leave. 'Tis likely all
Are small depositors. The large amounts,
If there is weakness, are already gone.
For such accounts are moved by other means.
In times like these one bank can rarely aid
Another. Each must guard the cash it has.
All have a large amount of frozen notes
And loans, and business does not warm enough
To thaw them. And no brighter days seem near.
No doubt depressions we have had before,
When business sagged and money lagged in flow.
But nothing do we learn from one that keeps
The next away. Forgotten 'tis when gone.

Our bus'ness and our lives do seem to run,
In cycles, like the river's flow, at flood
Or at low ebb. We hold no medium.
Much better it would seem to be if our
Affairs could move more evenly. Why do
We have some periods in which our needs
And wants seem quite insatiate? And then
At other times our pocketbook will close
As though it is an agitated clam?

(Exeunt Citizens.)

RANDALL

If all of our affairs moved evenly,
Then life would soon get too monotonous.
Hard times make us appreciate the good.
It has been said we do not want the years
Of twenty-eight and twenty-nine to come
Again. And yet we all were happy then.
We all had money and we all had work.
And many then were working overtime.
And everyone was then enjoying life.
We bought the things we'd waited years to buy.
Since then our joys have gone quite in reverse.
Some then quite rich are now upon relief.
We're waiting years to buy the things we need.
And now we lay the blame on everything
Or body but ourselves where it belongs.
But we have gained in health and common sense.
'Tis said that little gold we get except
Through crucibles. And everything that's good
In life we get through care and vigilance.
Life seems but strife between the good and bad.
Continually we discard the bad.
To cease our care leads but to despair.
We now seem in some crucible and would
Correct the faults that led us in distress.
The query then is, What was it was wrong?

The blame we place upon some group or class.
Yet, after all is said and done and this
Depression passes, we shall then conclude
'Tis but a thoughtful morning coming on
A thoughtless night before. We now have stopped
To meditate upon our foolishness.
But this delirium will soon wear off
And we shall then go do the things we did
Before, but use another brand. That's life.
(Exeunt.)

SCENE II.

*Abner's Garden.**Enter Abner and Katherine.*

KATHERINE

A little water, Abner, here
On these geraniums will do no harm.
Let's keep them fresh and have their color and
Their fragrance till that hoary harbinger
Of winter comes to change the scene. Not long
Have we to wait before the trees will turn
Into that golden, somber color that
Betokens gloom ahead. I dread the thought.
Short days—Long nights—And little we can do.
Keep house—Eat—Sleep—And read the papers, filled
With tales of murders, gangsters, kidnaps, and
A rehash of it all by radio.

ABNER

Dread not before the time doth come.
Do not give up so soon. Be not dismayed.
'Tis quick enough that gloom will come without
Anticipating it. Sufficient 'tis
To know that it will come. And then it may
Not be as dull as you anticipate.
The somber autumn leaves of golden brown
Forebode no gloom to come from Winter's frown.
Becoming are those hues when Nature seals
Its sweetness in the yield of Summer's fields.
(Sings.)

OUR DEPRESSION

Oh, give me the Autumn, the calm autumn days,
 The days of tranquility;
 The days when the sun, all his work then done,
 Moves on to a southern clime,
 And frosts in the morn turn to white fall'n dew,
 With crispness all through the air,
 And changes the green of our stately trees
 To colors of royalty!

Oh, give me the Autumn, the still autumn days,
 The days of solemnity,
 When Nature matures in a hidden way
 The harvests of summertime,
 And sweetness enseals in the fruits She grows
 For us in the wintertime!
 All hail to the autumn's fresh autumn days,
 The days of sobriety!

Oh, give me the autumn's pure autumn days,
 The days of serenity,
 When Nature prepares for a change of scene,
 Avoiding monotony;
 The days when the migrants, in v's o'erhead,
 Move down to their winter home,
 Presenting a sight that instills in us
 A feeling of dignity!

KATHERINE

(Sings.)

The grandeur of autumn's brisk autumn days
 Is not for me to deny;
 Nor do I deny that the autumn leaves
 Are lovely on trees, but then,
 The beauty of autumn's fair autumn days
 Is more of a fading kind,
 And needs far more zeal, has a dying way
 That beckons futurity.

The grandeur we find in the autumn time
Is more of a pensive kind.
It seems not alert, as if satisfied
To pass on its way beyond,
And leave its regrets that it must retreat
And take all its beauty, and
What worries me most is what comes along
When Autumn is done and gone.

ABNER

(Sings.)

'Tis true that the autumn's dear lovely days
Have less of activity,
And give us a feeling of age now come
Near end of an active life;
But then there remains in the time yet left
Before a new cycle starts,
The season when we shall enjoy the fruits
Our labor has given us.

(End of music.)

Life may cheer up again. It always has.
We have our ups and downs, but never yet
Have we stayed down. Affairs will not remain
Like this forever. If they do the time
Will come for us to worry. And no good
Will come to muse o'er future miseries.
Then, too, we have the Winter so we may
Appreciate the Summer. Either one
Would tire and get monotonous in time.
O'er cold the tropic native worries not.
The seasons where he lives are always hot.
He knows some thing called Nature always heeds
His wants and gives the fruits and fish he needs.
His clothes and shack with ease he makes of grass.
Withal where does he get in life? Alas!
Man loves to fight, choose any work whate'er,
Without some battles he will get nowhere.

KATHERINE

And yet he has his blessings more than we,
Perhaps. He has no cares that worry him.
And peace of mind is his at least. He cares
Not if output of steel is up or down.
To him the price of iron scrap means nil.
The failure of a bank takes nothing from
His purse. No grief befalls him in a strike.
He has no worry o'er the family car.
He lives the life that God may have designed
For all of us. God gives him all he needs.
He lives more quietly, contentedly,
And probably as happily as we.
Our life at best seems just the opposite.
More noise we make the better we seem pleased.
Nor can we get there quick enough where'er
We wish to go. It matters not how much
We have, we ever hustle to get more.
When we get more are we then satisfied?
The life we live seems not what was designed.
We live as though it is a game wherein
The object is to get what others have.
And when we get it keep it while we can.
If you must lose, that's just a part of life.
To plan and plot and scheme would seem to be
The purpose of our mind. A little for
Ourselves, but much against our fellow men.
To get ahead and lead, or to outwit,
Would seem to be the object in our life.
Of course, we pity him that's down, and help
With charity, but get contentment, too.
We save to get ahead. With what we saved
We take a chance. What happens? What a life!

ABNER

I knew not you could think so much.
Howe'er you seem to have the wrong belief.

In business we often help the man
In trouble, or about to fail. Of course,
We have much competition in all trades.
We strive to better our competitor.
By this we do not mean to make him fail.
Improvement is the thing we have in mind.
In bus'ness as in other things we learn
From others. Woe to him who does not learn.
We are not satisfied unless we do
Improve. If we do not improve we must
Fall back. You can be stationary but
On bottom. Only when we help and learn
From others do we have a forward course.
If some one fails, some individual
May gain, but the community will lose,
Granting his business was legitimate.
It seems of late we have gone backward some.
But we may find that this more seems than is.
When in our haste of late for wealth some things
Well known we then forgot, or did not heed.
In economics there is little left
For us to learn, but much for us to keep
In mind. The theorists we'll always have.
Such timely changes only are required
That fit into the progress we may make.
Unless we undo everything or most
We did in our last century and more,
Our movement soon should forward be again.
Things may get worse before the turn begins;
And then a curse more assets would become.
Should that come true, more taut must be our purse.
Economize and keep our bodies whole.
To ease the stomach often calms the soul.

KATHERINE

Economy will not be difficult
For you and me. Disturbing it will be

For Junior and Rosella. They are at
That age when youth needs more instead of less.
Should we retrench yet more and take away
Some needs and wants they will not understand.
Depression has no meaning yet to them.
They cannot see what change has taken place.
To them appears no dearth of things and means
That bring them happiness. Contentment at
Their age will shape their future course in life.
Some others yet are going strong. And ours
Will feel humiliated to slow down.
It will disturb their minds, and peace of mind
Is necessary for its proper growth.
Retrench but try to keep them satisfied
Would seem to be a proper course.

ABNER

We cannot change into such course at once.
It must be eased into in time without
Their notice. Pleasure and enjoyment do
Not come from money only. Often quite
The opposite is where it leads us to.
It would not be so far amiss to say
Our troubles now are due to too much wealth.
When money was so free some years ago
Were mortgages paid off or taken on?
And what was done with what was borrowed then?
But that is history we soon forget.
But little do we save when money is
So free. 'Tis only when we're forced to save
That it is laid aside. Economy
Must be the rule today as spending was
Some years ago. And youth will see the need
Of it. Here comes Rosella now.

(Enter Rosella.)

Good morning, daughter.

ROSELLA

Good morning, Dad, and mother, too.

ABNER

'Tis well to see you out so soon.
But why art covered thus? The sun is no
Worse here than on the beach. 'Tis not so strong
This hour of day. Didst have a night of din?

ROSELLA

It is the light I would avoid.
It is too strong; also too hot to have
The sun's effect come on us all at once.

KATHERINE

Why dost come out, dear one,
So early in the morn? You seem upset.
Has something come amiss?
Or did you not
Enjoy the night? Do let me have your mind.

ROSELLA

Oh yes, we had a lovely time.
The party was a grand success, and not
As loud as Dad would seem to have you think.
But, Mother, I would have a talk with you.

KATHERINE

'Tis well. Some minutes more
And I'll be with you. First, some things I would
Look to while here.

ROSELLA

Very well, Mother.
(*Exit.*)

KATHERINE

Abner, you are too gruff with her.
No good will come of asking her how loud
A night was had. It makes her think that you
Believe their nights are always loud. A change
Has come o'er youth that you have not observed.

OUR DEPRESSION

Much of that noise they once were wont to have
Has gone. That thing once called a flapper is
Not with us any more. 'Tis well she's gone.

ABNER

Perhaps so. "The evil men do lives
after them. The good is oft interred with their
bones." Perhaps it is the other way
With women. Let us hope so anyway.
It seems no evil came from flapperism.
'Twas not unlike some comet or a meteor,
Conspicuous unto our eyes, when seen,
But gone, is soon forgotten; and enough
Forgotten, let us hope, not to return.
And if her passing brought more quiet to
Our youth, perhaps some credit may be claimed.
At any rate quite sobering it is
To hear that youth are quieting their ways.
It should be true, for money's not so free,
And money is required to make a noise.
No doubt they have as much enjoyment in
A saner way. 'Tis better for them, too.
If profit comes to them from this then we
Have something to be thankful for in this
Depression.

KATHERINE

If there is need youth will economize
As much as we. They do the things we do.
Not many years have passed since all were too
Extravagant and made a lot of noise.
And youth were only doing as we did.
We squandered money then and did the things
That brought upon us this depression, and
Our youth now suffer. Sanity we can
Not claim as much as they. How fortunate.
For us it is that many of our youth
Will never, never know what happened then.

And many are the lads and lassies of
Today whose future once seemed bright, but who
Now face a dreary life of work ahead.

ABNER

Though many kinds of work there are,
Quite few they are who have been harmed by work.
And few they are who are worth while who have
Not come through much of it. Our sympathy
Should rather fall on those who need not work.
It seems a life of ease or idleness
That comes to some without a fair return
From them into the world's society,
Should most deserve our sympathy and thoughts.
It also seems that something still is wrong
When some can come into the world and look
Ahead and see no need of work. Howe'er,
The problem is, how can the fault be solved
By means that will not wreck our system?
That man shall live by labor is, no doubt,
As true today as ever. Nature must
Have meant that all should work their way through life,
And that is why our get rich quick schemes fail.
When we get too ambitious, with our minds
Upon our purse; when business booms and rides
The surging billows of prosperity:
We soon forget all waves lead to a calm,
That has no force to carry us along,
Wherein we cease to think of getting rich,
And worry o'er an honest livelihood.
It seems that is the way the world and life
Have been designed. 'Twas Cæsar, or someone
About his time, who said "O tempora!
O mores!" And so it is today.
But you should see what it might be that so
Disturbs Rosella's mind.

KATHERINE

I'll do that now.

(Exit.)

ABNER

Perhaps I was unkind
When I referred to what we want forgotten.
And yet we learn by what has gone before.
We little learn or know not known before.
If some infection rages in our midst,
And later passes on, it seems it should
Be kept in mind that its return may be
Forestalled. When this depression passes we
Shall soon forget its miseries and causes.
Not many long will know of it, and none
Will care to heed its lessons. We are quite
Impressed by statements that the good old days
Can teach us nothing.

(Exit.)

SCENE III.

In street, after election.

Enter Bamberger, O'Keefe, Randall, and Citizens.

BAMBERGER

'Tis well to see
This human happiness displayed again.
Long have we waited its return. That cloud
Of heavy gloom that weighed us down seems now
To move. A better feeling forms within
The public mind.

CITIZENS

(Sing.)

When the deal is getting irksome and
Your coin is getting low,
When your past parades before you,
Showing blunders in finance,
No matter what the trouble is,
Be it this or that,
There's nothing gives more confidence
Than a shifting of the deal.

Oh! a new deal now is coming,
It's coming through the clouds,
Through the clouds that held the darkness
On us now so long.
It will light the way before us
And deal each of us a chance.
Oh! what hopes arise, how gloom then dies,
With a shifting of the deal!

OUR DEPRESSION

When we all worked overtime with
 No worry over coin,
 When our confidence was full and
 Our greed was overbearing,
 When the future held no claim in
 Our thoughts of daily life,
 And a crash came down upon us
 We lay it on the deal.

O'KEEFE

Some confidence
 Seems to have come into the peoples' thoughts.
 Or some excuse they find to overcome
 The gloom that held enthusiasm 'n restraint.
 Whate'er it is some good should come of it.

BAMBERGER

At least it indicates a little faith.
 It seems a ray of light is breaking through
 The darkness we've been in. The world is as
 It always was if we can only look
 At it aright. And this may be the turn.
 Cheer lights the way and leads to greater deeds.
 What think you on it, Randall?

RANDALL

'Tis but some temporary burst
 Of feeling that will cheer us briefly but
 Will soon wear off. The change that we have brought
 About will ease our minds some weeks, perchance.
 And then some further cheer we will require.
 Our ills, or aches, if you would call them such,
 Claim time and patience in repair. No quick
 Restorative can do the work. Howe'er,
 Enthusiasm that runneth long, may lead
 To confidence, from which some good will come.
 So, let us hope for more of it.

BAMBERGER

Too heavy is your gloom to be o'ercome.
Some time will be required to wear it off.
Results you want before enthusiasm
And confidence. But you have things reversed.
Results will trail the other two. You would
A bookman pay you ere you place your bet.
Faith, that would be a quite good system, but
That system is not used. We're looking for it.

O'KEEFE

Some years ago we had enthusiasm
And confidence. We first lost confidence,
And then enthusiasm. Since then we have
Been only drifting as we would at sea,
Sans power and sans rudder. Only gloom
Was possible. Whate'er dispels it, Hail.
What we see here may only be mirage.
But it looks fitting and may herald well.
No good can come that does not have a start.
If something starts that has a good intent,
More good will come before its force is spent.
(Exeunt citizens.)

BAMBERGER

And fortunate while drifting we have been
That we have not gone down. Should we be forced
To drift much more that fate may still be ours.
Enthusiasm will steer us in our course,
And confidence will give the power. And,
When minds do all move in the selfsame way,
And everyone each day does his small share
With willing hands and cheer within his soul,
Results will trail and soon we see our goal.

RANDALL

Our minds are set to hope you're right.
No one is eager more than I to see
Affairs improve. Much difference there is

Between loud blasts of great enthusiasm
 And cheerful waves of confidence. No good
 Will come from one alone. Our people love
 To celebrate. They need but slight excuse.
 A celebration glorifies some 'vent
 That went before. We celebrate because
 What happened then became a boon to us.
 But here we only celebrate some change;
 And cannot know if it shall prove to be
 A boon or bogey. We can only hope
 Results will justify what we now do.
 But we must wait some time before we know.
 And if they do we then can celebrate
 Again. Quite pleased we are with what occurred.
 But more we need to bring back confidence.
 It is like other valued things we lose;
 Of which, 'tis said, we prize but little, or
 Think nothing of, until they're lost, and then
 Grow anxious for their quick return. And 'tis
 Almost as difficult to get return
 Of it as of some valued thing that's lost.
 To get results, of course, become a team,
 For only thus can we get up much steam.
 But then where will we get with all our force,
 Unless we set upon a proper course?

BAMBERGER

Results will follow efforts done with zeal.
 Not always is a proper course at once
 So necessary. Readings we can take
 As we go on. At first a start we need.
 Corrections then will place us on our course.
 Objectives often may be reached by routes
 Quite different. Most problems can be solved
 By more than one solution. Seldom does
 A battle have but one plan only that
 Would lead an army to a victory.

Were it not so then many battles that
Were won in ages past would have been lost
If the command at each had fallen to
Some other general. For rarely do
Two generals agree on many points
That go into a plan of battle. One,
Who is more bold, would quickly charge his foe.
Another would maneuver forces to
Some vantage point. A third would hold his ground.
And each might gain a victory. Then who
Could say such plans were wrong? Of course, the best
Results may come from some one plan. And there,
It seems, is where we chiefly disagree.
Just now, it also seems, that plan is best
That is upon some quicker action based.
More action! Action is our urgent need!
The kind we see in books wherein we find
Macbeth says to Macduff, "Lay on, Macduff,
And damned be he that first cries Hold, Enough!"

RANDALL

In twenty-eight and twenty-nine
We rode upon a wave of confidence.
That wave was like all other waves that do
Sometime recede or go upon the rocks.
Life seemed a rosy picture to us while
We rode its crest. But, some breakers came
Before our eyes, too far for most to see.
The picture quickly changed within our minds.
Our confidence began to quickly wane.
In haste we threw much overboard to ease
Our fall. The wave we rode then moved so fast
That many were too late. And they lost all;
And most of all, they lost all confidence.
So many then were stung—and, yes, by their
Own stingers, too—that long must be our wait
Before much faith returns to them again.

Eventually it will come, of course.
How quickly it will come depends on what
Is done or threatened to be done. Some big
Upheaval also might keep it away.
Nor is it something you can catch with net
Or trap. Our industry has given it
A broader meaning than it had. Before
Our industry approached its present scale,
Our confidence was satisfied if we
Could see ahead a year or less. But now,
To give us faith, the road for sev'ral years
Ahead must clear before that action comes
Through which alone we may expect relief.
'Tis possible some action we do need,
But not the kind you choose to have us heed.
We are quite like some patient who o'erworked
Himself, as we had done some years ago;
Exhausted in the frenzy of the times,
We now are resting to recuperate:
Or like some torpid alligator, with
Distended belly filled with his success,
And drowsy, like ourselves, from being too
O'erstuffed, that lies upon the bank until
Is slowly worn away the surplus he
Has taken on. What action we do need
Is only what is needed to remove
The surplus we did then accumulate.
And time alone will move our surplus stocks.
Most other actions will increase our tax,
And add more burdens to o'erburdened backs.

O'KEEFE

Here comes MacDougal and his son.
Let's see what brings them here.
(Enter MacDougal and son.)

BAMBERGER, RANDALL, O'KEEFE

A cheerful evening to
MacDougal and son

MACDOUGAL

A cheerful ev'ning it would seem to all.
Whate'er this New Deal is or may bring forth,
It brings some cheer upon our streets again,
Which helps to keep the grass from growing there.
The phrase sounds catchy and, like some new song
Hit, people make the most of it while new.
Ere long it quickly comes to tire and wear
Upon our ears and we would none of it.
Experience has told us that in games
Of more than one we often want new deals.
And often when new deals are given us
We find there's much in them we don't expect.
Ere long we tire and want another change.
Of course, some vantage comes to him who deals.
Of course, again, he makes the most of it.
That equilibrium that does not change
Is rarely found in life. To act against
Each thing or act there is some antipode.
It seems that we and almost everything
In nature are incessantly at war
To gain an equilibrium we do
Not want.

BAMBERGER

We now await results.
The people seem to want a change.

O'KEEFE

And pleased they are to see it come.

BAMBERGER

But Randall's gloom is still unchanged or worse.
Why, Porter, are you not where you are wont
To be? Would she not come along?

PORTER

No rabble would she see.
And ev'ning yet is young.
(Exeunt all.)

SCENE IV.

Abner's garden.

Enter Abner, Katherine, and Rosella.

KATHERINE

And, Abner, let
Us think of color in the things we plant.
Forget the dull and somber things that give
No feeling to our eyes. Our moody times
Need something to dispel the gloom.

ROSELLA

Carnations and some hyacinths
Will give us color; and tulips, too.

KATHERINE

Some dahlias and
Some peonies will help when roses fail.

ROSELLA

Some primrose and
Some violets and daffodils will serve
For things more delicate.

ABNER

In Spring we are
Like flowers,—quite ambitious. There is much
We plan to grow and do. We need more room
To plant the half of what we think we need.
Our pep of mind is quite enlarged. In Spring
Our faith will know no failure in the soil.
A rosy picture only is in mind.
'Tis then we never think of all the things
That lie in wait to live upon our work.
Nor do we know what Nature has in mind:

That Guardian within whose hands are placed
 The fates and fortunes of our work, for Her
 To ravel out to us from day to day;
 Nor if, or not, She has designed to come
 Some ruin from the elements upon
 Our work. Nor do we ever seem in Spring
 To know, or realize, how quickly comes
 A cooler ardor in a hotter sun.
 The Winter's purpose seems to be to grow
 In us more faith in Summer.

KATHERINE

'Tis well we never know
 What Nature doth intend.

ROSELLA

You are too pessimistic, Dad.
 You have much luck in growing flowers.

ABNER

You are yet young and little have you seen
 Of life. The Spring has only yet been yours.
 You have but seen that period of life
 Where'n Nature nurses Her achievements to
 The point of self-reliance. You have yet
 Its Summer and its Winter to embrace.
 May torrid waves nor frigid blasts not come
 To you! You are some blossom coming now
 To bud, near ready to be plucked, and all
 Ahead looks wonderful. But never can
 You know what life ahead may hold for you.
 Man looks ahead but little and sees some
 Of what may come of him, but woman none.
 More faith than man has woman, and more prone
 To give quick credence to man's words. Much on
 Her ears does woman trust; but man more on
 His eyes. Becoming quite it often is
 To trust much less in what we hear, and wait

If aught the eye may see. Your verdict hold
Until the eye may see some proof of what
Is said. Or until some falsehood comes to light.
Time rarely fails to show if what is said
Be true or false. Be neither deaf to what
Is said, nor blind to what is for the eye.
More easily does trouble come to us
Than does it go away. If time be some
Unwonted burden, may't be brief, not long.
Be in no haste, though these be days of haste.
Youth is not prone to look behind in life,
But always looks ahead, which mostly is
As it should be. Howe'er, to look ahead
Aright, the view must come up through the past.
All that we know of life we learned from what
Has gone before. Our future view is but
An estimate. And that is based upon
The past.

ROSELLA

No view ahead is wholly clear. They're filled
With spots and shadows and some dingles where
The light that comes up from the past seems not
To shine. Would that such shadows fade away!
Howe'er, fear not I heed no counsel.

KATHERINE

Momentous moments come
In woman's life no less than come in man's.
But here comes Ezra.
(*Enter Ezra.*)

ABNER AND KATHERINE

Good morning, Ezra.

ROSELLA

Good morning, Mr. Ezra.

EZRA

Good morning to all of you.
And how is Miss Rosella?

OUR DEPRESSION

ROSELLA

Quite well, thank you, Mr. Ezra.

KATHERINE

Have any thoughts of garden come
Upon you yet? The time is here when life
Seems to begin anew.

EZRA

Not yet. I think
It best to let the first tryout or two
To pass, and from the side observe, so when
We come up to the starting stake we can
Go on. Not yet has Winter placed the wand in
Summer's hands. Too many things there are
That now beset our minds. Our surplusses,
Now giving pains, should check the efforts we
Expend in raising more. In most things we
Are rich; in some few, poor.

KATHERINE

I see your mind yet weighs upon the times.

EZRA

Quite true. The aches we have do linger with us as
The fleas upon a cur. And, like the cur's,
Our efforts only shift the irritant.
Some clouds begin to move but only to
Some other point. They still are ominous.

KATHERINE

More good would come, it seems to me,
If we could get our minds on something else.
Have each do something for himself, and not
Depend so much upon relief. If we
Did that, soon much of this would pass away.
No different are we than one who thinks
He's sick, but is so only in his mind.
When he gets out and goes to work he soon

Will think no more of it. There seems to be
Abundance everywhere and no one starves.

(Telephone rings.)

Howe'er, Rosella 'nd I will leave you now
And may be with you later.

(Exeunt Katherine and Rosella.)

EZRA

There is much in
What Katherine has said. Our minds are sick
From dwelling on our ills. So many out
Of work have always worked for others at
Some special line. They think of work where they
Are but a tool. Those sturdy pioneers
Who did so much for us, we see no more.
Our progress and our system came from them.
And now the system they produced destroys
The pioneer. Although we feel his loss,
His system gave us much that we must hold.
The comforts and the luxuries we have
Are due to something he began. And these
We get through mass production where each man
Knows little but his line of work. If work
Should stop, as it has done, and will again
When people have their surfeit, the men are out
Of work and then know nothing they can do.
Thus this depression differs much from those
We had before.

ABNER

It seems the time must now
Be near when work must start again if we
Are not to drift back where we were before.
The sun has now some dreary cycles made
Since came the flood from Amalthea's horn
That rolled in twenty-eight and twenty-nine.
The hum of industry, with work for all,
Both day and night, then brought prosperity.

No freshet from the horn, or gentle flow,
 Could satisfy our wanton passions then.
 So great were then our needs, or rather wants,
 Our minds had grown to be so ravenous,
 That only some uncommon flood could reach
 The full extent of mammonish desires.
 So satiate we then became the horn
 Has needed but to scarcely drivel since.
 But torrents flow where torrents flowed before.
 Though fickle seems this cornucopia,
 Its rise and fall of flow are constant if
 Through many years recalled.

EZRA

Quite true it is.
 Most things do move in cycles like the sun.
 To everything there seems an opposite,
 Or antidote, that follows in its path,
 To fill the void, or take away the glut.
 The surfeit of fatigue and noise of day
 Is calmed by peace and quiet of the night.
 In Winter's frigid blasts the Summer's heat
 Is quickly spent. In wakes of plenty trail
 Our times of want.

ABNER

'Tis Nature's way
 In giving us our food and livelihood.
 And yet, who knows but that our days of want
 Are blessings more than those of plenty?
 Indifference and apathy do ride
 Upon a steady flow into our lap.
 Vigor decays, zeal ends, and courage cools,
 Thrift dies, when wants are too long satisfied.
 "Ambition in despair, will stalk away."
 But let necessity come prick our minds,
 Or press upon our loins the spur of want,

Then will our lulled abilities arouse,
As if had come the end of some carouse.

EZRA

When I was young
It oft was said, what now we hear no more,
That trials and some tribulations make
Us men and women. Best through these, we then
Were taught, are shown our strength and character.
But in this day of speed we would discard
Such tests with relics of an older age.
Some proof not geared so low we now would have
That would at once make known to all our worth.
So, as you say, there may more blessings come
From days of want than come from days of plenty.
Many they are who can ride upon the floods,
That go on rocks as soon as floods subside;
And those who were attached to them will sink
Before the faith they placed in them has hatched.
A flood picks up those then untried in life,
Bowls them along on currents they can ride,
Then beaches them, when currents lose their force,
But carries those along who hold a steady course.

ABNER

Our craze for speed
Would have us live tomorrow's life today.
Today we want and get some things that ought
To come to us tomorrow or next year.
We can not wait for them. We must enjoy
Them now, and later, maybe, pay for them.
Installment buying brings us luxuries
And semi-luxuries and often, also, woe.
The cost is greater, but we hope to pay
The bill, or note, some day from funds we hope
Some day to get. But if we fail to get
That future pay, as many learned some years

Ago, not only are we out the funds
We paid, but, probably, we lose the thing
We paid them for. That sort of thing expands
Our industry above its normal growth,
And leaves the buyers poor. It helps business,
And circulates more money at the time
Of sale, but guarantees to take too much
From circulation in the future.
And when production stops, or slows its pace,
As it must do some later, if not soon,
Our money then is concentrated and
Stops circulating. If installment sales
Had been tabooed, and semi-luxuries
Bought on the better economic plan,
Consumption would have been more uniform
And normal, and production would have brought
On us no surplus like the one it gave.

EZRA

To what you say add one thing more.
Then you will have the causes that have made
This grave depression so emphatic and
So lasting. And that one thing was the wide
And frenzied buying of our stocks on margin.
So widely were those two things done that, by
The recoil, we were so hard hit we can't
Get up again. However, we enjoyed
The frenzy while it held. So greedy are
Our trade and business, and, too, ourselves,
That only the installment method gives
Sufficient speed. All others are too slow.
We know the evils of the system, but
We choose to take the profit now and leave
The evils come upon us later. We,
Of course, do realize that many of
Us buy when we can get things on a pledge,

Or note, but would forego those things if they
Should take our cash, although we may have it.
The notes are purchased by our banks for cash,
By using money that belongs to men
Who run upon the better basis. Soon,
This sort of thing becoming overdone,
As did occur some years ago, when we
Had filled our urgent needs and those for years
To come, production stops, and many who
Have given notes are out of work, or else
Their income stops, and banks cannot collect,
And soon are out of funds and forced to close.
But little thinking is required upon
This frenzied chase for business to believe
The banker does the least discretion show,
And he who sticks to cash will come to be
The sucker. But depressions seem to be
No more than problems given us to solve.
Each generation seems to get its one.
Each differs little from the one before.
Time seems to be the only thing that solved
Them heretofore. And probably that is
The only cure. Much can be done to check,
But little that will hasten, their egress.

ABNER

Installment buying is
A hypodermic to our business.
It stimulates for some short period
Of time. Eventually some recoil
Will often come. However that may be,
It is a system that has come to stay,
And we, or those who follow us, may look
For more depressions after this. Not it
Alone, of course, will cause the trouble, but
It helps to bring it on. More surplusses
From industry will come again as soon

As we can bring more action to ourselves.
We also like to gamble, gambol, choose
Whichever gamb (le-ol) you may wish. And then
We'll try, or many will, the margin route
Again to wealth. Our gambling instinct is
A weed i' our nature we cannot extract.
(Exeunt all.)

SCENE V.

A street. A strike.

Enter MacDougal, Randall, and Citizens.

RANDALL

It seems we live on strife.
If we are not at war with others we
Must war amongst ourselves. We never seem
To care for peace. We always think someone
Is getting more than he should have. We each
Would get what surplus there may be.

MACDOUGAL

No other route will bring us to advance.
When people are submissive they will get
Nowhere. For ages man advanced but little.
Almost no progress came until some few
Began to realize that they did not
Receive their share of things in life. Of course,
Such persons then, as now, were radicals.
They gradually got a following
That then insisted on equality,
And rights in things due them according to
Abilities. Our progress then became
More rapid.

RANDALL

It always had been my belief
That, through past ages, many realized
They never got their proper rights in life:
And that it was because their government
Ruled with an iron hand and held them down;

And that the ruling class were able by
 Some distribution or prerogatives
 To hold their rule o'er the subjected and
 Dejected. Those who ruled were satisfied,
 And others could do nothing. That, I thought,
 Was why no progress came. But here there is
 No clash between the government and those
 It rules. Presumably the government
 Is neutral in this clash, and only a
 Spectator. Often, though, the government,
 In some or other form, is found to have
 Been present when a settlement is reached.
 When this occurs, we are to that extent,
 It seems, returning to the system that
 Restrained our forbears from advancing.
 Returning to the system, though in small
 Degree, may bring to us the same results.
 A trifle once begun is often found
 To get momentum to transport it to
 Its goal.

(Exeunt Citizens.)

MACDOUGAL

These strifes quite often reach
 A point where something must be done. And who
 Would be less partial than the government?
 The government acts through its agents. It
 Is easy to believe such agents may
 Not be completely neutral. But it seems
 The most acceptable of plans that we
 Have yet been able to devise. Until
 We find a better one we follow it.

RANDALL

'Tis also strange these strikes
 Should be more prevalent when many do
 Not work, and who want work at any price.
 It seems like it should be the other way.

It now would be more logical to get
Along the best way possible; and when
Our business gets going good, to have
What strife they want, when it would do less harm.
It seems we do retard our business
When it is down, and try to keep it down.
And yet we want it to revive.

MACDOUGAL

Some years ago we had prosperity,
And business was good. Now many of
Us think that business then got more than
Its share of that prosperity. So some,
As business now acts like it would start
Once more, would make arrangements early just
To get their share of what prosperity
May come again. That is the reason why
The strife precedes the thing for which the strife
Is had. Of course, we know, it will retard
Our business, but many think that less
Important than to gain a proper share
Of what will come with better times.

RANDALL

There seem to be some other reasons, too.
A small but certain class of people like
Depressions. Times when peoples' spirits are
Depressed, serve better their designs. They are
The agitators who would keep us roused.
The unemployed are but a fertile field
In which they sow the seeds of schemes and plots
That suit their purpose. And, to hear them far
And wide, they ever would enlarge this field.
In periods when business thrives and times
Are good, they know that all are satisfied.
No one will listen to them then. And then,
As we become more humble through distress,

OUR DEPRESSION

And restless, we become more easy to
Excite. The agitator then obtains his best
Results. Those who were once more fortunate
And worked, and many who now work, believe,
When told, they suffer an injustice yet
To be corrected. Our condition makes
It easy to believe that something once
Was wrong, although there may have been no wrong;
And that it was the other fellow who
Obtained the benefit. I often hear
It said these wars between our business
And labor are so caused.

MACDOUGAL

No doubt some agitators, and
Some radicals, and even communists,
Do help to cause some strife. Quite often much
Of good has come from radical ideas.
In history are many radicals
Who helped progress. A radical is one
Who dares believe the 'stablished order can
Be bettered. And we probably have yet
Not reached that stage of progress that permits
Of no improvement. To extremes he goes
To gain a minor point. No harm will come
By having some few radicals within
Our midst. Of course, a radical that is
A communist, is something different.
Some of our colonists tried communism,
But soon discarded it. Nor does it seem
That we have reached that stage where we would like
It any better.

RANDALL

There is some evidence of a desire
That we go back, or forward if you choose,

To communism. It is a theory,
Or plan, that ought to work. But when we think
It ought to work our theory leaves out
A fatal element in human nature.
We would that all should equally like work,
And have the same efficiency. Howe'er,
Too many of us get more fun from life
By watching others work. More pleasure still
Would come to us if we could share results
Without the toil. Our colonists did not
Know this at first, but soon discovered it.
And they were chosen groups.

Ah! Communism is but
Admission of inferiority;
That essence of the devil brewing in
Some minds to take away equality
And liberty by God bestowed on all,
And make of us mere ants and bees for some
Few years incessant toil; a scheme to take
From man that individuality
Giv'n him to see what he could do t' improve
The lot of all; that lowly attribute
Shown in a willingness to live upon
A common fund, to which, within, one vows
He would contribute less than others do,
And take from it more than to him is due;
That pageant of inferiority
We see in some who would permit themselves
To suffer pangs of serfdom rather than
Exhibit a will to equality;
A shroud that falls or easily is spread
By demagogues on people in distress.
For man 'twas not by God intended, or
Like ants and bees we would have been designed,
And to a few, for uniformity,

OUR DEPRESSION

Would fall the power to perpetuate
Mankind on earth.

MACDOUGAL

When a depression comes on us, of course,
We think there's something radically wrong.
Especially becomes this true when it
Succeeds a time of high prosperity,
If such it was we had some years ago.
'Tis difficult to understand two wide
Extremes so close together.

RANDALL

A pendulum swings in reverse almost
As far as it did go the other way.
Prosperity is but a fever in
Our business due to a rapid flow
Of blood. When blood quits flowing rapidly,
Excitement cools below the normal, and
Our business chills, and we are chilled with it.
In such condition eagerly we list
To him—and legion is his name—who has
A remedy. Not difficult is it
For some then to believe their blood from them
Was taken, and should be restored. All that
They need is a transfusion.

MACDOUGAL

And possibly
There is some truth in what they think. And it
Is somewhat natural for them to look
For guidance elsewhere than to those who led
Before. Nor does the unrest seem confined
To elders only and to those who want
To work. Our college students share it, too.
More difficult it is to understand
Why they should be so much concerned. Unless
It is due to decreased allowances.

On standards of prosperity we all
Desire to live. The students work must be
No less than what it was before. Although
The idle are the restless class, it seems
Our students feel that all will soon be idle.

RANDALL

Our students now are at that age
When we, too, thought that we could save the world.
They see affairs in general are not
What they should be, and they are ready to
Correct the faults. The difficulty is
They cannot wait until their time arrives.
The world waits anxiously for them to set
Affairs aright. Howe'er, 'tis hoped they learn
That theories are oft expensive and
As often do not work.

MACDOUGAL

Enthusiasm impels their acts.
We all are prone to give advice; and, too,
Quite anxious to start early doing so.
In college 'tis no different from what
It is outside. In times of restlessness
He who would make a change, or has some plans
Or theories, can get a following.
Those who have new, yet old, ideas soon
Are trailed by many. Combinations soon
Are formed that bring them notice. Restless we
Now seem to be. The nudists even seem
To get a greater following.

RANDALL

And yet it does seem strange.
There is work here for many and they fight
To keep the work from being done. And at
Another place they work for th' privilege
Of doing jobs that are available.

OUR DEPRESSION

There seems to be some principle involved
 That some now say helped us move forward.
 If we can keep that principle in view
 And only guide by it all will be well.
 But if we are too freely led, as is
 Quite possible in times like these, all may
 Not be so well. But with the nudists it
 Is different. With them 'tis possible
 That life thus far has been a failure and
 They would begin anew. And with, it seems,
 A solemn declaration that they will
 Not lose their shirt again.

CHORUS

(Sings.)
 When depressions perplex you and take all your
 cash,
 And leave you with little in this world that you own,
 There's something to be said for your cause, we
 believe,
 When you cast off your clothing as did Adam and
 Eve.

When the times are speedy and you're hard pressed
 for cash,
 And you find there is need to economize more,
 A saving will greet you that you'll find has much
 worth
 When your dress is no more than you had at your
 birth.

And there's more to be said in your favor, it seems,
 When you gambol on the green in some spot, as did
 Eve
 When she danced to the tune of some babblesome
 brook
 In some garden of Eden or Isle of Capri.
(Exeunt all.)

SCENE VI.

*Abner's lawn.**Enter Abner, Katherine, Rosella, Ezra, Randall and Porter.*

ABNER

Our troubles never singly come, it seems.
Or else our minds get in some special rut
At times that bends more toward them. When we
Have one disease our thoughts are so inclined
That other ills appear to ravage us.
And while we cure ourselves of one we would
Be rid of all. Kidnappers, gangsters, and
Bank robbers now have come upon us in
Such force our care is taken from our chief
Concern.

EZRA

Those pests are with us all the time.
We notice them when something has us down.
Just as you say when we are sick our minds
Would feel the ills we knew we always had
But never worried us. When we are well
And strong we would confess their presence and
Forget their work. We now do seem to have
An excess of the plagues you bring to mind.
'Tis possibly a restless spirit found
In some now breaking forth when none are much
At ease. Some seem to find it difficult
To settle down and take life quietly.

KATHERINE

Too many are that way.
Too many yet would be cave men and live
The cave man's life. They still would use the club,
And all that came from it, to gain their wants.

OUR DEPRESSION

EZRA

That is our method of
Advancing. We go forward for some time
Until we tire, or else lose courage, then
Fall back. When we do this we soon are in
A mess. And when we see the evil get
The better of us we wake up again
And get back what we lost.

RANDALL

To get back what we lose would seem
To be the uphill feature. Sliding back
Is quickly done. It took some years to reach
The point we made in twenty-nine, but not
So long to get us back on bottom.

ABNER

That is if we have yet
Reached bottom. Not so sure are we of that.
It seems our retrogression now has stopped.
It may be only for the moment. Floored
We were but have not yet been given the
Full count. And now seem on our feet again.
Nor should our faith yet be so full not to
Expect some further difficulties in
Remaining on our feet. Some further blows
May be expected at some other point.
Howe'er, that aid is steadily at work
From which results have always come.

EZRA

Our people do love action, and,
When something does go wrong, some evil must
Be found to work upon. And then we look
For quick results. Quite natural it is
For us to think some things were wrong, and they
It was brought woe upon us. Rarely does
A driver take the blame whene'er he comes

Into a wreck. The fault lay elsewhere than
On him. That we were speeding ere we came
Into our economic wreck none will
Deny. The fault may be more on ourselves
Than on our system. If our system served
Us well before and brought great progress it
Is probable it only needs slight change.
There are more faults in human nature that
We can't correct, and never change, which need
A guard, than will be found in any well
Developed economic system.

KATHERINE

You men do have
But one idea at a time. And that
Idea now is the depression.
Once it was money, money. Evenings
Are for the purpose of removing from
Our minds the troubles of the day. So let
Us leave them to some other time.
(Exeunt Abner, Katherine, Ezra, and Randall.)

ROSELLA

Now little do
We hear except depression and relief,
Whatever they may be. They say there is
But little or no work for anyone.
But where did all of this come from that we
Now have. There must have been much work sometime.
We have much that has taken much work to
Produce.

PORTER

It seems our people worked too much sometime,
And left us little that we now can do.
Our industries so overworked themselves,
And filled our wants for years to come, that those

Who work therein must wait some years before
A need will come again for things they make.
There was a Christmas in our business
In twenty-eight and twenty-nine. As soon
As that was over business eased as is
Its way when Christmas has gone by. And now
We wait for it to start again.

ROSELLA

I love Christmas. I love it in con-
templation, in realization and in recollection.
I should think business would love it, too.

PORTER

It loves the kind you have in mind,
But not the kind we now do suffer from.
And now let's do as your dear mother says,
For evenings are for other things and thoughts.
The darkness seems to say to lay aside
And out of mind the things that worry us
By day. Day goes and takes its light as if
To quit us from our daily tasks and thoughts.
Its stay with us is lengthened in those months
When Nature contemplates more work. And then
Its stay is shortened so we may enjoy
The fruits our labor gave us. Little is
The difference between our days. The sun
Comes up and does his daily task, and then,
With cords of gray, pulls to the west his light,
That, unlamented, fades away. We rise
At dawn, go quickly to our work and do
Our daily task, 'ver praying for the night
To come with its relief. Night comes to calm
The world and heal the wounds left in the wake
Of day. And night! What change! How different!
And how it calms the turbulence of day!
And what contrasts of nature then begin
To play! How the air cools into delight,

And how the darkened stillness brings a sense
Of awe! The prattle of the brook near by,
And rustle of the leaves o'erhead wherein
The firefly lights and wends his way, would bear
Us gently o'er Lethean waters to
Forgetfulness and dreams. The owl's to-whoo,
And wail of far-off animal, or some
Unwelcome sound, or roar of breakers far
Away, awaken in our minds some thoughts
Of omens that betoken evil on
The way. The mingling of this ecstasy
And awe so tingles in our souls, and leaves
The mind to muse what Nature may intend.
All, covered over with a darkened and
A freckled, twinkling firmament, subdued
By th' moons display and you, turns mind and soul
To reveries.

ROSELLA

(Sings.)

Oh, what wonders come before us with
the coming of the night,
When the moon is doing duty giving us
reflected light,
And the stars are twinkling beauty from
a firmament of blue,
That brings the mind to wonder of
the worlds beyond our view!

Oh, what rapture comes upon us 'neath
the glowing of the moon!
And what feelings come upon us if
the stillness seems to doom!
Oh, the reveries that come to us when
Nature does perform
Between the fading of the light and
the coming of the morn!

Oh, the glory that is ours to live
 in Nature's wonder realm!
 Oh, the wonders that are brought to us
 with Nature at the helm!
 Oh, the peace to mind and body, to obey
 the Night's request
 After turmoil of the day, when Nature
 places us in rest!

PORTER

(Sings.)
 Oh, the joy that is betokened by
 the twinkling of the stars,
 A twinkling that appears to wink
 a welcome by the spheres!
 Oh, the pleasure that is ours to play
 a part in Nature's scheme,
 And observe Her working wonders in
 an ever changing scene!

Oh, what happiness is ours within
 this realm of mystery,
 To enjoy and see the works of Nature in
 Her reverie;
 With freedom to partake of it,
 as free as heaven's blue,
 And enhanced, when in your presence,
 by the loveliness of you!

ROSELLA

(Sings.)
 Of all the wonders that surround us in
 this universe sublime.
 Of all the gifts bestowed therein
 by Providence divine,
 Of all the marvels worked by Nature,
 and foremost in the van,
 The most wondrous of them all are in
 his majesty called man.
(Exeunt all.)

SCENE VII.

In street at Relief center.

Enter MacDougal and Bamberger and citizens.

BAMBERGER

How now MacDougal? How is business in
Relief today? This seems to be one place
That never comes to idleness. It now
Appears to grow in popularity.
We all know where it is, in case.

MACDOUGAL

Not yet is there decrease
In numbers coming here. At times some few
Are dropped but new ones come to take their place.
So large our problem has become that it
Is difficult to make inquiry in
Each case. And we would rather err and give
To one not needing aid than to refuse
One much in need of it. When we ourselves
Somewhat are down, we have more sympathy
Than is in us when we are all pepped up
And going strong. We probably should feel
The other way, but find it difficult.
Then, too, some come who yet have funds, but who
Have nothing coming in, and who would keep
A little in reserve. 'Tis difficult
To draw the line.

BAMBERGER

The fact that we can give relief
Shows Nature does Her part supplying all
Our needs. Quite tangled somewhere seems to be
Our distribution, so that some have more

Than should be theirs, while others now have none.
It seems some individuals were once
At fault, permitting a condition to
O'ertake them; or some warning from the past
Was overlooked. Not only was enough
For all by Nature given us, but a
Sufficiency so bounteous that She
Not only takes a rest, but celebrates
In our food belt. In celebrating She
Doth also take away some surplus that
We may the sooner get to work. She seems
To give a surplus now and then to test
Our distribution, or the weaknesses
In some.

MACDOUGAL

Some are like squirrels, ever storing nuts,
And never seem to get enough. And some
Of us are more like rabbits, trusting all
To nature for our future needs and wants.
And, as it is between the squirrels and
The rabbits, th' latter seem more numerous.
Another feature, new in our relief,
And worries not a little, is the fact
That some, who never would accept relief,
As if it were a taint, have come to think
That it is due them even though they can
Get work. So common has relief become,
In one or other form, old notions from
Our midst, it seems, of late, have mostly gone.
And in their place we have "Why work if you
Can get relief." This change of mind must have
Some reason causing it, and it may be
Due to too great a liberality
In our relief. I hope it possible

Quite soon that most or all may go to work,
Ere this idea spreads much further.

(Enter Ezra and Randall.)

MACDOUGAL AND BAMBERGER

(Both.)

Good morning to you.

EZRA AND RANDALL

Good morning.

BAMBERGER

MacDougal says he hopes relief work soon
Will end. But little hope seems yet in sight.
Though business shows some signs of greater life,
Much time will be required before it can
Provide work for the many who need it.

EZRA

Not soon, I fear.
In many lines there still is surplus or
Sufficiency. And industry must wait
Until it sees some real need or call
For things it makes before it takes more men.
And slow and gradual will be the start.
In meantime here our work must carry on.
Not soon may we expect a falling off
In numbers coming here. Our industries
That make our stable goods, in which our needs
Are satisfied, and yet quite overstocked,
And structure work, are either idle or
Are running on one-third capacity.
Those industries that make necessities,
And things of a more temporary sort,
Will carry on at ordinary rate.
Howe'er, what they produce, or yield, is but
A pipsqueak in our business, or but
The spinach crop of industry.

(Exeunt citizens.)

OUR DEPRESSION

RANDALL

Not for some time then, Ezra, do you look
For some big Bertha in our business like
We had some years ago?

EZRA

Not soon. And better it will be for us if it
Should never get as large as it then did.
An even flow is what we want, not too
High, nor too low. Our business is like
A river, only satisfactory when it
Flows steadily along at proper height.
When business gets rampant, as it does
Sometimes, 'tis like a rampant river out
Of banks and hurling to destruction or
To ruination many in its path.
Again, when too low, poverty and want
For those depending on 't accompany
Th' decline.

BAMBERGER

What, Ezra, do
You feel will be th' effect of this relief
Upon our people?

EZRA

'Tis possible our living standards have
Increased too rapidly within the last
Two decades; or too rapidly for us
To make adjustments in that time. Some years
Will pass before we know if that is true.
We must assume that each of us must earn
His way through life and pay for all he gets.
Of course, necessities of life, as fixed
By Nature, never change. Those are our first
And cardinal requirements. Lately, though,
To them we added many comforts and
Conveniences that we have come to call

Necessities. To have those comforts and
Conveniences, and we would all have them,
We should have funds with which to purchase them.
This adds to individual expense.
To cover this expense, which is no small
Amount, the individual must earn
Much more. Now our capacity to earn,
Or model earning standard, is, or should
Be, set by average men who till the soil.
For that is Nature's model way of life.
And yet, not only have their earnings not
Increased in the last decade, but they have
Decreased. Therefore, at least it seems to me,
We try to raise our living standard, th' cost
Of which must fall on each, when earnings of
Our earning standard have declined.

RANDALL

To me
That sounds quite like some brain trust dictum on
The air. A lot of theory. But you,
Like they, are safe; for what you say can not
Be proven nor disproved.

EZRA

Well, I think many look at this just as
I do. Discouraged many have become.
We would increase our living standards and
Desire that all may live thereby. Yet there
Are many now for whom the future does
But little promise. Nothing seems in view
For some to even distant vision. In
The race from which they fell they feel they are
So far behind to struggle is no use.
The pioneer, as we knew him, has gone.
And in his place we have more who believe
Society owes them a livelihood.
That feature doth not look so good.

OUR DEPRESSION

BAMBERGER

Has it not been this way
In all depressions? We before have had
Depressions when the future seemed as dark.

EZRA

This one is different because
So many now depend on industry.
Much of our industry is new. Before
It seemed that business only sagged; but now
There's much of it that long has ceased to be.
More lived before on work connected with
The soil. Our standards then were not so high.
Relief work, as we know it now, was then
Unknown. It seemed not necessary. It
Is necessary now if we would keep
Our living standards where they are. That is
One thing that makes it difficult to draw
The line in our relief, and say who is
And who is not entitled to it.

RANDALL

Of course, the world will go
Along and out of this sometime we'll come.
Do you think that we are learning anything
In this that will, when we get out, help us
In warding off another?

EZRA

We have learned much and still are learning, but
I doubt that any good will come of it.
The generation that now suffers this
Will be concerned but little with another.
Some things, it seems, come to us only through
Experience. 'Tis difficult to keep
The young from fire. They must find out if it
Is hot. Likewise it does no good to say
Do "Neither lend nor borrow." Good advice
It is, we know, but choose to take a chance.

The things above all others that brought this
Depression on were borrowed money and
Installment purchases, which is the same.
Once busy was the printing press at work
In printing notes and promises to pay
That later clogged our banks and business.
But heed what we learned? Never! Anxiously
We wait the chance to do the same again.
A dollar down and three years interest.
A branch of increased living standards 'tis,
That we will not forego. Not yet, at least.

MACDOUGAL

Conceived and so devised has nature been
That life for us should not be difficult.
A surplus or sufficiency of things
There always is. But in our nature is
An element that always makes us throw
Things out of gear. Quite slow, no doubt for fear,
Has Nature been to let us know of things
She has in store for us. For many years,
Without a knowledge of the forces that
Surrounded him, man trampled o'er, the world.
At length, as if in sympathy for him,
So he could open up the earth and see
And use what is therein, She showed him what,
From things She had, would make gunpowder. But,
When noting what he used it for, refused
To show him more for many years. She then
Permitted steam and electricity
To come to him and saw no evil use
Of them thus far. As if encouraged, She
Then showed us gasoline, and now God help
Us or we need no more.

(Exeunt all.)

SCENE VIII.

*Randall's lawn.**Enter Randall and Bamberger.*

RANDALL

Some minutes yet must see us here before
MacDougal and O'Keefe are due to come.
Their coming we'll await here on the lawn.
Some thirty minutes past the hour of one
Should see them here.

BAMBERGER

The time will quickly pass while in this shade.
But on the links our time will slowly pass
Beneath the burning sun we have today.

RANDALL

Howe'er, out there more fresh will be the air.
MacDougal, too, should have some news today,
Since Ezra has returned from where news comes.
In days like these, you know, we look to those
With some authority, give ear to them
Complaisantly, and hope and trust in plans
And schemes they have, although such seem to be
Against the laws of nature known to us.

BAMBERGER

I knew not Ezra had returned.
E'en so there will but little come to us,
If aught MacDougal knows. His business is
To learn from us and pass it up above.
News goes from bottom up; instructions come
From top to us. Howe'er 'tis possible

He may enlighten us. We'll learn wherein
Improvement is, but not wherein it's worse.

RANDALL

If that is true then little we learn,
Methinks. Not yet that corner do we turn.
And often I do think that corner will
Be found upon some other road than that
Which we now follow.

BAMBERGER

Some problem 'tis to know just where or what
The right road is. Some detour we may be
Upon, for rough it is, that leads into
Some trouble rather than recovery.
If such it is, and many think it so,
We seem to lack the courage needed for
A change of course. Nor do we yet agree
Just what might be the proper course to take.
Howe'er, more pleasant seems the road we're on.
But where it leads, or what it has in store
For us, remains for us to learn.

RANDALL

That we have changed our course seems true.
Or else along the old, with lettered signs,
We now have marked the bogs and mud spots in
Our system where, some think, we failed before.
But some there are, nor are their numbers few,
Who say these signs denote the very things
That now do bog our business down. Who's right?
We can not know in whom we should believe.
Some seem to long for that old order we
Discarded. Even if it put us where
We are, it also made us what we are.
It was the dawn of speed and brakes we lacked.
We climbed to dizzy heights but could not stop.

OUR DEPRESSION

The fall then came and now we try again.
Some brakes we choose before we make a start.
And ply them taut, some say, before we do
Depart. And on our way we are, they say,
But still remain.

BAMBERGER

Experimental are the things we try.
Though some of them have oft been tried before,
It does not follow they will fail us now.
Our ways in life today are different.
Now many are employed in industries
That only lately came into our life.
Not many years have passed since we were more
Dependent for our needs upon ourselves.
And, too, our needs seem greater than before.
Some things that once would luxuries be called
Are now necessities. And if they are
Necessities our work should net us more
Than what our labors netted us before.
Thus "more" and "more" is now our crying wail
That often checks our industries' full sail.
Nor does this wail from labor only come,
By 'mployer also is some wailing done.
Thus, regulations seem to be our need,
That both employer and employee must heed.

RANDALL

When business is good there's work for all.
Our pockets then o'erflow and satisfy
Our needs in many things for years to come.
Consumption next slows down, our business lags,
Employment wanes, and we get tighter still.
From which consumption then yet lower goes.
Some cue from nature seems to be our need.
When bounteous comes the gifts from Nature's store
With surplusses of cotton, wheat, and corn,

She mops them up with droughts and dust storms vile,
Or may be floods and old boll weevil, too.
Then of these things a shortage quickly comes.
Their values rise, and cheer is on the soil.
Thus Nature regulates Her gifts to us,
But never checks the flow from industry.
Therefore from nature we should take the cue,
Throw off some cliff one-third of all our cars.
Destroy one-third that comes from industry.
Destroy some railroad trains and railroad tracks,
And terminals, just as we do in wars.
Leave Nature's gifts to Nature to control.
And from Her learn how to control our own.
Though dread and shocking would such action be,
'T would constant make the flow from industry.
And what more ruthless is than Nature's ways,
With droughts and dust storms lasting days and days.
Through them She does Her surplusses keep down
Or else the purpose of them is unknown.

BAMBERGER

Some years ago, if such had been our plan,
The time was quite propitious for such work.
Supplies from industry were then at peak.
Inordinate consumption stopped at once.
And industry slowed down; employment bogged.
Since then our country's debt has grown almost
Some seventeen and one-half billion dollars.
Our state and city debts by large amounts.
Relief has claimed a large amount in gifts.
We took less pay and taxes took much more.
And what we lost in stocks we'll never know.
It would not be amiss to say we've gone
Behind at least some fifty billion dollars.
And yet it seems the end is not in sight.

Destruction on such scale, to keep ourselves
Employed, would quite appall our minds.

RANDALL

Such havoc would
Appall us if it happened all at once.
But Nature does not so apply Her means.
Though bounteous and constant be Her gifts,
Yet constant is Her work that takes away.
A surplus first She places in our grasp.
And then yields less, or none, or else destroys,
Till we have need for more. Now here, now there,
In many ways, at divers times, we see
Her works to keep an equilibrium.
Not always falls Her wrath, nor even smiles,
Where they seem due. Just as it is with death,
Which often quickly comes into our midst
To claim the young; then creeps upon the old.
But no depression would have come to us,
Though havoc such destruction might have caused.
Not now would unemployment be our wail.
Nor would our debts have grown to what they are.
It would have been quite like what seems the waste.
Of war. And yet what is destroyed or lost
Through war is only so much gain for some.
Our profiteers in war we have. And all,
It seems, make money in a war except
The men who either face or fire the guns.
The nation goes in debt,—which means no more
Than that it buys, and gives its money or
Its bonds to those who profit from the war.
Most things destroyed in war are made by man.
And man replaces them which makes more work.
Thus profit labor and materiel.
Almost the only thing destroyed in war
That is not made by man is man himself.
And therein is where nature seems to act.

Man is by nature so devised that he
Must go to war but to reduce his kind.
By his destruction no one seems to gain.
By droughts and dust storms normal values are
Returned, but undue gain is claimed by none.
Through these does nature point to us the way
To keep output of industry at bay.
If industry makes more than we should use,
And nothing takes away the residues,
That time is near when many will be poor
And find the wolf has camped without their door.

BAMBERGER

Such ways we do not care to heed.
But greedily we do the opposite.
Although we may do extra work, two crops
We can not claim one year. But you can buy
The things we make, turn in your old and pay
A part, and give your note with interest
For what remains. Twice wrong this seems because
It costs us more for what we buy, and then
Thereby we help to make a surplus, too.
It is no wonder we have years to wait
Before we can consume what we have made.

RANDALL

From nature we get some of all the things
We need and some we make ourselves. When things
Go wrong we think the fault is not our own.
Instead of keeping down the flow of things
We make ourselves; we check the flow of things
That nature gives. Then nature also acts.
And, lo, a shortage comes! Elsewhere we then
Must go to fill our needs of nature's gifts.
When this is done we pay an extra price.
And pay it to one other than our own.
This leaves us less with which to buy the things
We make ourselves, and makes that surplus grow.

Through much experience, no doubt, so set
And fixed have Nature's ways become.

BAMBERGER

'Tis too much theory
To think we could destroy as nature does.
'Tis also worse than theory to think
That we shall change our ways. But now here come
MacDougal and O'Keefe.

(Enter MacDougal and O'Keefe.)

Greetings, Gentlemen.

MACDOUGAL AND O'KEEFE

Warm greetings to you both.

MACDOUGAL

From what we heard beshrew me if I err
To say your minds revolve o'er business woes.
But now our business troubles we'll leave here,
Deep in Lethean waters.

(Exeunt all.)

SCENE IX.

Street at night.

Enter Randall, Bamberger, Citizens, and fools.

RANDALL

What have we here?
They choose another way to celebrate.
This seems to be some kind of sacred rites
With but a few that take a part in them.
Some moments let us stop to see what is
Their scheme, if any scheme they have.

FOOLS

(Sing.)
Deep in our memory,
Interred without regret,
Emblazoned on our brain
What we should not forget.
Relentless time moves on,
And mists come o'er the mind,
Or young come take our place.
And, lo, we find we did forget.

BAMBERGER

It seems they are some would be Dagonets
That now would bury our depression. That
Is not a bad idea if it could
Be buried and could not again return.

RANDALL

We may be ready now
To bury this depression, but we can
Not take and bury certain traits that in
Our nature grow and cause depressions.

OUR DEPRESSION

We thought we buried liquor once but found
 It would not stay interred. We had not reached
 That stage of progress yet. Our traits may be
 Like liquor, nuisances that need control
 More than interment. But let's see what is
 The purpose of their acts. My man, what is
 The idea of this scene?

FIRST FOOL

That is for you to figure out.
 And when you learn, tell us, for we ourselves
 know not. Ere doing this we were unnoticed
 but are noticed now.

FOOLS

(Sing and dance.)

If you would noticed be,
 Be foolish and you'll see
 That foolishness allures more than
 The wisdom of the wise.
 Guard what you have and find
 You fail to interest mankind.
 But be more free with yours and learn
 What interest we show
 Until is gone what lured us so.

RANDALL

A fool can give, but rarely takes, advice.
 A wise man takes, but rarely gives, advice.
 A rather strange anomaly. 'Tis strange
 What doth become of much advice; so much
 Is given and so little taken. How
 Can much be given when so little is
 Found taken?

BAMBERGER

Foolishness appears contagious. We
 Must move along or you will be among
 The fools.

RANDALL

Their program seems not at an end.
Why go if they have more to offer? Their
Ideas are harmless and we heed them not.

FOOLS

(Sing and dance.)

There once was a family named Jones.
In money they led all the rest of us.
And they were the guide for the countryside,
And all took pride to do what the Joneses did.
But Jones had the coin to pay for his speed,
While we used the product of pulp from the mill.
And sooner or later the reckoning came,
And Jones still led all the best of us.

(Enter Porter and Rosella.)

RANDALL AND BAMBERGER

Greetings!

RANDALL

'Tis good to see you here!
Come join us.

BAMBERGER

We here
Have found another way of celebrating.
These fools have songs for this occasion.

FIRST FOOL

Why not sing a song for the lady?

SECOND FOOL

The moon is up and seems to crave
a song.

FOOLS

(Sing.)

All for you is the smile of the man in the moon
He would like but to know if your heart is in tune.
He would know of your thoughts. He would dare you do aught.

Do you feel his intent? Do you see what is meant
By the light that is shaded and faded for you?

Oh, what reveries come when the man in the moon,
With his face all aglow, for it seems he would croon,
From the sky looks our way, and his smile seems to say,
He will give his consent, and you need not repent,
For the things you have done and will do before him!

Oh, what rapture is found in the light of the moon
What a glorious thing 'tis to have such a boon
And that smile has a way that to me seems to say,
If you still are too shy, won't you wait and I'll try,
To pass from your vision 'neath some clouds above you.
(Exeunt all.)

REFLECTIONS IN VERSE

REFLECTIONS IN VERSE

RESONANCE ALONG THE RIO GRANDE

*(With apologies to the shades of
Edgar Allan Poe)*

Once out in the mesquite area, while I waited, 'lert
and wary,
In my hut along the sun-baked Rio Grande's shore,
Suddenly there came a clamor, as if some one chose
to hammer
On some anvil to remove the quiet that had reigned
before;
Or to frighten ghosts that seem to come when tumult
is no more.
May be that and nothing more.

Then the welcome stillness deepened, as the distant
echo weakened
In its travel from the verdant hills beyond the
river's shore.
And my mind was free to wander over memories,
and ponder
O'er some things I read embedded in some books
of ancient lore;
O'er some things almost forgotten since I read them
long before.
Pleased I was the din was o'er.

Oft it was my mind did wander in that hut along the
border,
When it meant to ponder on the things that
happened long before.
But the noise itself repeated, and this time it seemed
deep seated
In the source from which it flowed and seemed
would flow forevermore;
In the source that surely had a rich abundance in
its store
That, at least, and maybe more.

Then again the din departed, leaving peace as when
it started,
In that restful realm where heat and sunshine endeth
nevermore;
And I then did sit and ponder what is going on out
yonder
In that world from which I boldly started in my
days of yore;
In that world almost forgotten in my quest for worldly lore,
That, at least, if nothing more.

Thus again I moved and wondered, or perhaps I
dreamed and slumbered,
And my mind would moisten with the mists from
off Lethean shore.
But the noise had just abated, when again my ears it
grated
With a rasping sound that seemed far louder than
the lion's roar;
With, it seemed, a sound that only from the depths
of hell could soar.
Such it was, I do deplore.

Then once more the blare receded, and I hoped
there'd be repeated
That disturbance of the welkin with such resonance
no more.
Then I might continue doing anything to keep from
rueing
My predicament at being plagued and scourged by
such a bore;
And in knowing not the means to quell such
amplitude of roar.
Since, thus far, I had no score.

So, once more I waited, wondered, if, alas, again it
thundered
With that reeking resonance as if from some
Plutonic snore.
Near, I thought, the time must be when it shall cease
and be no more.
Scarcely were such thoughts enacted, when more
loudly they were blasted
With reverberating sound that must, it seemed, the
dome of heaven explore;
With that teeming, rolling richness of discordant
notes not heard before:
Only to remove me from my dreams to hear some
jackass braying,
Braying in the mesquite at some distance from my
door.
That, it was, and nothing more.

MARY MCCREA

It was eventide in the month of June,
And many a year ago,
When we took a ride at the close of day,
Far out o'er the hills to go.
We each had a horse, each eager to know
Which would the lucky one be,
For each must carry one, but only one
Would carry Mary McCrea.

When this was settled and we were astride,
We happily went our way.
Each horse was restive and full of esprit
And each in the lead would stay.
To the hills we rode at galloping rate
Where air was fragrant and free;
Out where we might be by ourselves and then
To see what there was to see.

On a ridge we rode, all covered with grass,
Where winds move freely along;
Where jackrabbits live, all ready to race,
And meadow-larks sing their song.
But the air was mild with a gentle breeze,
That came up the slope aglow;
All fragrant and sweet from the daffodils,
That grew in the dale below.

From the ridge we rode to the dale below,
To follow the stream therein;
To see where it led and what there might be,
If more than merely the fin.
And what do you think? As we reached the shrubs
That grew along the stream bed,
Some quail would flutter and scurry about,
Then rise and fly on ahead.

We followed along to see where they went,
And tell them we meant no wrong.
Our ride was only with nature to be,
And perhaps to hear their song.
They settled again in the grass ahead,
Scattered for safety, you see.
Near the stream we rode, on one side was I,
Beyond was Mary McCrea.

Singly they arose as we passed them by,
Further down the stream to ride,
And I crossed again some hurdles to take
That lay on the other side.
When hurdles were o'er 'nother hill we chose,
Other than that we'd been on,
Its summit to reach by a route that led
O'er beds of dandelion.

We cantered along o'er the yellow sward
And presently reached the hill,
Then zigzagged our course in climbing the slope,
And slowly moved up until
The summit was reached where vision was good,
And thence we could see afar,
And the prairie hen from the grass would rise
And fly like a shooting star.

Some minutes we stopped on top of the hill,
And rested our mounts while there.
Then slowly rode down on the other side,
Leaving the air that was rare.
Cantering along o'er the grassy plain,
Startling some rabbits at times,
We presently came to a deep ravine,
All lined with cedar and pines.

We followed its brink for a mile or two,
 Wending more slowly our way
In rounding the curves it made in its course
 Through rocks and yellowish clay.
To peer o'er the brink in awe, now and then
 We stopped, or else ceased to go,
Or maybe to breathe the fragrance that came
 From scented cedar below.

As further on down by its course we rode,
 Its banks became more apart;
And an open space would lie here and there,
 From which timid deer would dart.
We soon saw a path that led the way down,
 Coursing a fallen pine tree.
Side by side before, now one led the way,
 I or else Mary McCrea.

On reaching the bed of the glen below,
 We rode as a pair again,
Wholly bewitched by a beautiful place
 That was little marred by men.
Its beautiful trees of birch and the oak
 Divinely stood here and there,
With sprinklings of moss o'erhanging some bows,
 And birds gliding through the air.

Some cedar by chance were scattered about
 To add to the loveliness,
And hold some color in a charming spot
 When warmth of summer grows less.
With patches of fern in a blue green turf,
 And flowers the air to leav'n,
Some bower seemed this for spirits designed
 When visiting us from heav'n.

Some moments we paused this beauty to note
That nature had set aside.
But the hour was late and the distance far,
Yet left in our route to ride.
Cantering along where the turf was good,
Hurdling some logs now and then,
We soon reached th' open where oaks were dispersed,
Down at the foot of the glen.

Some cattle were here all lounging around,
And chewing their cuds the while.
And up overhead were some whippoorwills,
Roaring through the air in their style.
For now it was dusk and the sun was gone,
Leaving to the moon from then
To take us in charge and guide us along,
And lead us back home again.

We ambled along and came to a brook
That passed through the countryside.
So we held its course for we knew it flowed
The way we chose to ride.
By flickering light through the leaves above
Slight aid was given to see;
While the narrow path required one to lead,
I or else Mary McCrea.

The world was at rest and darkness prevailed,
Mellowed by the moon's display.
And stillness came on to soften the scene,
Quelling the clamor of day.
More slowly we wended our way through the woods,
Disturbing the quiet of night,
Oft rousing some birds from their sleep o'erhead,
And starting them off in flight.

As further on down by the brook we rode,
The croaking of frogs began.
And a nearby owls to-whit and to-who
Seemed like a warning to man.
We soon left the trees, and then we plainly
The lights at our homes could see.
And that was the end of that day and ride
I had with Mary McCrea.

* * * *

When your days work is o'er, and you're foggy in
mind,
'Tis fresh air and diversion you need. And you'll
find,
To relax, there's nothing to compare with a ride
On a horse and a beautiful girl at your side.

THE DEMAGOGUE

When things move along in a wondrous tone,
And every dog seems to have a bone,
The ship sailing on as if passed a storm,
With nothing ahead that seems to alarm,
With a sky o'erhead that was ne'er so fair,
Then, oh then, is the time
To prepare.

When things are booming and all of us work,
Lay something aside, some danger may lurk.
Remember no sea is so boundl'ss or deep,
But shoals and some rocks near the surface creep;
And ere we strike them or bound on their lair,
Then, oh then, is the time
To prepare.

When business slows down and you're out of work,
With schemes abounding till our minds do irk,
That say "to do this," or else "to do that,
Will set us aright and put us at bat
And lead us onward and out of despair,"
Then, oh then, is the time
To beware.

If your country thrived for decades just passed,
And moved up forward to the first from last,
Yet now seems faltered and moves with less force,
It seems quite likely it had the right course
And needs little change to maintain it there.
But then, oh then, is the time
To beware!

When a ship at sea encounters a storm,
Or moves on a rock with its bottom torn;
What then is required amidst all the noise,
Is careful guidance to maintain her poise
Till some port is reached or weather is fair.

For then, oh then, is the time
To beware!

Though your country moved from lowest to first,
With freedom for all the greatest on earth,
Yet times there will be when things are depressed,
And demagogues rant and tell all the rest
That everything's wrong and nothing is fair.

O, countrymen, then is the time
To beware!

THAT'S TEXAS

If you wander far and wide and seem
not sure just where you are,
But you notice things are different,
and vision reaches far,
And you see the cotton blooming,
or fields all white with it,
You may wonder what may be this place
that seems to you so fit.

THAT'S TEXAS.

Or perhaps you find you reached a spot
where citrus fruits abound;
And the grapefruit served you is of all
its kind the best yet found,
Growing in a fertile valley like some
mammoth busy dell.
Still you wonder what may be this place
of which you think so well?

THAT'S TEXAS.

Or perchance you see some derricks bringing
from the earth black gold,
Roaring through a surface that already
seems enriched fourfold;
All beneath a sky the most serene
for those who take to wings.
Yet you wonder what may be the place
so favored with these things?

THAT'S TEXAS.

Then again you come where distance though
unhidden fades from sight;
And your vision rolls along the rolling
prairies with all might;
And you see some countless cattle browsing
o'er the grassy plain.
Then you wonder at the bigness of
the things in that domain.
THAT'S TEXAS.

Or in Spring you chance to see the earth
take on your favorite hue,
With its dells and dales and hills and slopes
all dressed in richest blue.
Then you pause in admiration for the place
that gives such show.
And no more you wonder. 'Tis bluebonnet time!
And then you know
THAT'S TEXAS.

BETWEEN THE COLORADO'S CANYON WALLS

(A Dedication)

O, thou mighty Colorado,
That, throughout the ages, rolled thy waters
 from the Rockies to the sea;
That, with thy raging torrents, cut a gash across
 Earth's bosom that is marvelous to see;
That, throughout the eons in thy time
 knew no master thou wouldst claim,
Here, between thy canyon walls in Hoover Dam,
 man poured his concrete that did end thy rampant reign.